SECOND LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

Mr. GRATTAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A SHORT HISTORY OF OPPOSITION."

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[redacted] BY J. AND D. GARRISON, [redacted]

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BRITISH MUSEUM

A

SECOND LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HON. Mr. GRATTAN.

THE Hiſtorian of Oppoſition again obtrudes himſelf on your attention. Your receſſion from the parliamentary warfare, and the manifeſto, or written ſpeech, with which you have accompanied it, are events which he cannot let paſs unnoticed.

WHEN I addreſſed you before, I could ſee no other part left you to take but retirement and obſcurity. The reſolution you have come to is a triumph to my ſagacity. The friends of their country have now to apprehend you only as a pamphleteer, or belike, as one of thoſe dealers in paragraphs (to uſe your own words) "of pro-"found and ſpirited inveſtigation—the authors "of which remain entirely unknown."

WITH this opinion as to your future plans and ſtation in the country, I had cloſed my former

addreſs to you. A year was juſt then elapſing ſince the date of your brilliant exhortation to a vigorous proſecution of the war abroad, and cordial unanimity at home. Unanimity at home and abroad was with you, at that time, the firſt, the ſecond, and the third duty of every friend to his country. And why? Becauſe you believed it to be his ſupreme duty; and becauſe you happened to be miniſter.

By a ſweeping diſregard to every item of your inſtructions as miniſter, you blew up, in a moment, the entire fabric of your authority. Had you then retired, you would have ſpared to your country a conſiderable degree of agitation, and poſſibly have ſaved to yourſelf ſome remains of character. But you delayed this neceſſary ſtep till you had furniſhed materials for ſtill farther embroiling the nation, and till you had ſtill lower plunged yourſelf in the depths of inconſiſtency and tergiverſation.

Till then you had, on the whole, exhibited in your creed hoſtility to democratic opinions, and a determination to ſtand or fall with Britain. But ſince that time you have forgotten the obligation of theſe ſacred duties: and the ſuddenneſs of your change of language and conduct, connected with the ſuddenneſs of your ſelf-provoked fall from power, the abuſe you have caſt on the perſons who raiſed you to that power, and the incenſe which you have ſo forwardly and ſo wantonly laviſhed on their (and, for that reaſon,

reaſon, your) enemies;—this ſudden change, I ſay, unfortunately for you, leaves us at no loſs to explain your deſertion of theſe duties. You deſerted them, too, when the crime of deſertion was aggravated by the circumſtances of the criſis, —to uſe your own language, "gnawed by the "times, uninſtructed by example; and in mo- "ments which are held alarming, entertained no "fear, conceived no panic, and felt no remorſe "to prevent you from going on, at any riſque, "with a villainous little barter—in the very "reelings and frownings of the elements, trem- "bling at loſs of popularity, but not at crimes."

THERE were many who conſidered your wild manifeſto to the Catholics as the mere conſe- quence of a paroxiſm of diſappointment, and who expected that the effects of the frenzy would be reſtricted to the moment of agitation. But far otherwiſe: from that day forward, the prin- ciples of that manifeſto became the governing principles of your conduct; and ſuch is your ſudden regard to conſiſtency, even in a bad cauſe, that in your recent farewell declaration you leave them as a legacy to your adherents.

In manner, as well as matter, this publication differs in nothing from the ſtyle of dry, ſententi- ous harangue, into which your parliamentary elo- quence has degenerated. In common with that ſtyle, it poſſeſſes much glitter, quaintneſs and quibble, and much too, of the heavy obſcurity of ſophiſtry: but it poſſeſſes none of that luxuri- ous,

ous, commanding argument that would refuſe and diſdain to mingle with glitter, and quaintneſs, and quibble, and ſtrained laborious diſputation. I muſt, therefore, beg to hold myſelf excuſed from the ſervile exactneſs of following you, page by page, through its flat uniformity of party invective. The great lines of your political conduct, as laid down as well in your parliamentary meaſures, as in this popular appeal, furniſh a more natural, as well as more agreeable guide.

The grand principle to which you refer all your meaſures is—Conciliation. Why, this is juſt the ſame principle, Sir, with the Unanimity which you preached up when miniſter to Lord Fitzwilliam. It only happens that the means by which you were to have ſecured it when in power, and thoſe which you recommend to your ſucceſſors in power, are diametrically oppoſite. It happens, too, that the meaſures which they now purſue are exactly thoſe which were once YOUR OWN. It ſhould ſeem, then, that your real ground of parliamentary oppoſition was not diſlike to the meaſures themſelves, but merely envy of the fortune of thoſe to whom their direction is committed.

The Gun-powder and Convention bills were, I believe, your's, ſo far as agreeing to keep them on the ſtatute-book, and I humbly preſume, if need had been, ſeeing them carried into actual execution. The retaining and keeping in force thoſe ſame bills you are now pleaſed to ſtate as one very great and powerful obſtacle in the way of conciliation.

A ſuſpenſion

A ſuſpenſion of active partiality to the Catholics, after the very extenſive, and, on their part, almoſt unhoped-for liberality with which they had been treated juſt before, you had alſo acquieſced in, or my Lord Fitzwilliam is ſadly miſtaken. But to do you juſtice in this affair, you quickly changed ſides, and that at the expenſe of a breach of confidence.

THERE remain two points which you once conſidered, and which your ſucceſſors ſtill conſider, as cardinal—Parliamentary Reform, and the War with France. As to the latter, you were warmly in favour of it during the whole of the ſeſſion whoſe commencement ſaw you miniſter, or you left it to your ſucceſſors in place without interruption on your part, to be ſo. And as to Reform, in the beginning of the ſame ſeſſion you were decently ſilent about it: at the cloſe of it too, tho' repeatedly challenged as to your intentions, you were alſo ſilent. You left to Mr. Forbes to give it a negative excluſion from the intended meaſures of the cabinet at which you preſided.—But if we truſt to the ſchoolmen, there are negative crimes, as well as crimes of actual commiſſion; and in ſuch an affair as Reform, you, of courſe, ſtand convicted of a very high miſdemeanor indeed.

PARLIAMENTARY Reform was, to be ſure, a very excellent good ſort of ſpecifick! But for you, a miniſter, wrapped as you were in the ſervice of conciliation, to adminiſter it, was quite an impoſſibility.

poſſibility. If any unfortunate patriot had dared to hint ſuch a thing to you, you would doubtleſs have rode him down on the inſtant, as you did Mr. Duquery—and thus have ſpared yourſelf trouble with any future importunate intermeddler.

But when you were no longer miniſter, the caſe was quickly altered. You were then a ſimple member of parliament, and at liberty to take into your own hands the part which you had juſt puniſhed Mr. Duquery for invading. Then, indeed, comes your project for Parliamentary Reform. I will not do you the injuſtice to imagine that you would have propoſed or ſupported this meaſure, if you could have had any ſuſpicion that it would be carried. Your ideas of its efficacy correſpond completely with thoſe of the United Iriſhmen, who avowedly wiſh for a ſeparation of the kingdoms and a democratic republic: and, however ambition or vanity, or any other little paſſion may blind you, I do not imagine that you have as yet made up your mind to this topmoſt exaltation of patriotiſm. Still I cannot but obſerve, by ſome expreſſions which you let fall, not caſually either, that you are providing for whatever may happen.

"What (ſay you) is a reformed parliament, "but the reſtoration to the People of Self-"legislation, without which there is no li-"berty? Self-legiſlation is life, and has been fought "for as for being. It was with a view, therefore, to "reſtore liberty, and with a view, alſo, to ſecure "and immortalize royalty, by reſtoring to the "People

" People Self-legiſlation, that we propoſed Re-
" form."

" In vain is the ſnare laid by the fowler in the ſight of the bird." This was once held to be wiſdom—but poſſibly your ideas are revolutionized; for what but revolutionary madneſs could force you into the ſnare laid by our domeſtic Briſſots and Sieyes's, after their treachery had been expoſed to the meridian blaze of day—after they had been compelled in the face of the world to bear teſtimony againſt themſelves?

And yet Tone, as he told his confederates, had not, in the beginning, dared ſo barefacedly to unveil the complexion of his projects. Far was from his ſeemings the naked doctrine of Self-legiſlation. He ventured no higher than the hackneyed phraſe, parliamentary reform. " With a reformed parliament, however," ſaid he, " every thing is eaſy." With a reformed parliament, it is *an eaſy thing* to ſubvert the conſtitution, and that without violence: unleſs it is ſo reformed, that ſubverſion cannot be effected " without " means too violent for the good People of this " country."

To waſte time in comparing the ſyſtem of reform of the laſt ſeſſion with that of three ſeſſions ago, or either (as you do) with the ſyſtem of the Friends of the People in England, or, laſt of all, if it were poſſible to come at them, with your

own private ſentiments on the whole of them—would be, after this, an idle and a thankleſs buſineſs. To attempt to guard our demagogues againſt the ſolly and madneſs of attending to any or all of them, would be an equally thankleſs buſineſs: for what taſk more impracticable than to impart ſight to the wilfully blind?

You tell us of a ſtriking objection to your ſcheme of Reform—that the conſtitution "has worked well," that it has produced beneficial effects. The only way by which you meet this objection is by calling in queſtion its correctneſs in point of fact. With reſpect to its working in this kingdom before 1782, you tell us that "no man will contend for it:" and with the ſame juſtice we may retort the remark, that with reſpect to the bleſſings it has conferred on us ſince 1782, no man but a rank partiſan of your own will offer to deny them. And as to partiſans of this deſcription, they are at full liberty to affirm or deny what they pleaſe.

You remind us too "of the working of the borough ſyſtem in England," and its conſequences, the frequency of her wars, and the burden of her debt. As to the former, I know of no country whoſe government was leſs addicted to plunge it into war: there has not been a war within this century which has not been called for, even loudly, by the voice of the People. And as to the extent of the national debt, and the facility it allowed to encourage us in perſevering in theſe

wars,

wars, it reſts with you to ſhew that the wars of the preſent century have exceeded in duration or in animoſity thoſe of any former period whatever. One merit the national debt, with all its poſſibility of fatal conſequences, may juſtly claim: it obviated the neceſſity of inflicting on our trade premature and deadly wounds, ſuch as thoſe laſting calamities in which the ambition of Louis XIV. involved France. And as to its accumulation, I know not with what face you can charge it to "the working of the borough ſyſtem," or what with you is ſynonimous, the ſyſtem of corruption: for be it remembered, that it was an abuſe which no ſet of candidates for power had an intereſt in countenancing. Patriots and mock patriots there were in plenty to enquire into, and impeach for neglect of the means to diminiſh it. But it ſeems to have been a misfortune whoſe exiſtence was reſerved to be known only in its accumulation. And yet, with your uſual candor, you are pleaſed to carry it to the account of—the manifold abuſes inſeparable from the working of the conſtitution!

You are fond of quoting Lord Chatham; you talk to us of his opinion of the conteſt between Charles I. and his parliament. That opinion, as you give it, is in pretty much the ſame language in which Mr. Fox indulges himſelf on the preſent war. The two caſes have much in common; and very much in which they differ: but why you ſhould introduce Lord Chatham's authority, uncalled for as it was by the ſubject before you, I

know not, unleſs through extreme reverence for his character, and deference to his opinions. If this was the caſe, let me requeſt you not to treat with contempt the only opinion which, as I can learn, his Lordſhip ever gave, applicable on the preſent occaſion. That opinion was conceived in terms of the utmoſt abhorrence of the conduct and ſuſpicion of the deſigns of men who in the doubtful and trying æra of 1745. (for even then there were demagogues of this claſs, and at every ſimilar criſis there will be ſuch) by harangues on a reformation of the conſtitution could be capable of adding to the complication of danger.

If after this I were to urge you with farther authorities, I ſhould refer you to the prophetic opinion of Monteſquieu;—"In a time of ignorance, magiſtrates have committed the greateſt evils without ſcruple; in an enlightened age they tremble while conferring the greateſt bleſſings."—Thus reaſoned a theoretic diſquiſitor in the profound calm of ſettled ſociety, while the evils of licentious innovation formed the diſtant background of his perſpective. Quite differently do you act in all the terrors of the revolutionary ſtorm. Your reaſons for doing ſo muſt originate in no common prudence indeed.

You tell us that they do. You propoſe your policy as a middle courſe, to allay the ferments and compoſe the differences in public opinion which agitate the nation. Alas! Sir, your views

are ſhort-ſighted; your policy is miſerably narrow. The party whom you propoſe to conciliate are but a ſubordinate ſet of politicians: rather they are no politicians at all. The cry of theſe men is quiet, and the liberty of ſelf-enjoyment: they matter not whence theſe come; though enemies as they are to inſtability, they poſſeſs a ſort of inſtinctive horror againſt revolutionary aſſiſtance. But, as I ſaid before, they are not politicians: generally ſpeaking, they follow a better trade, and their minds are buſied with better occupations. By way of varying theſe occupations, they may now and then talk politics; but they are merely echos, and repeat with very natural efficacy the language of idle clamour, which unleſs by miracle is always loudeſt. In their cooler moments, with the ſound of clamour ſtill in their ear, and in the horror of inſtability or diſloyalty, or any ſudden change unhinging all their former diſpoſitions and habits—they may, from very deſpondence, be diſpoſed to recur to any quack who will deal out to them his noſtrums of quieting draughts, and preſcriptions of a middle courſe of regimen, which ſhall procure to them medical relief, without ſubjecting them to the rigours of medical diſcipline. But ſurely it is not to men of this claſs that a ſtateſman ought to direct his attention, when in perilous times and in the conflict of parties he is compelled to make diſtinctions. They are, it is true, a very numerous, and, if you pleaſe, the moſt valuable deſcription of ſociety; but acting totally as unconnected individuals (as they muſt do when the object of purſuit is to their minds not even of

ſecondary

moment) a practical politician will find it impoſſible to mould them into an effective party; he may perſuade them to act as allies:—but it is only when things come to extremities that they can be urged to take a leading part; and it is in ſuch times that their activity proves (as it has done in France, and as it muſt too generally do) the conſummation of their deſtruction.

To talk, then, of committing your projects of State-Reform to the active direction of this claſs of citizens, is, in times like the preſent, to talk worſe than nonſenſe. No, Sir, there are, and you know it, but two parties to be conſidered: compared with theſe two, this third claſs will ſee itſelf a mere make-weight; and according to the good or ill deſigns of either, it will, as either proves victorious, find its ſituation.

The diſtinctive principles of theſe active leading parties are as oppoſite as can well be conceived. The one is occupied in conſidering how much Happineſs is to be ſacrificed in order to the eſtabliſhment of Liberty: the other aſpires only to ſecure the ſtability and extend the enjoyment of Happineſs—treating Liberty as an ingredient in its compoſition. Between parties, thus widely at variance in their purſuits, it is not wonderful that no terms can be kept, or that what conſtitutes with the one the higheſt merit, ſhould with the other be the greateſt crime. They ſtand fairly committed; to propoſe to them conditions of

conciliation

conciliation would be folly: every hope of a change but that which is decided by events, muſt be abandoned.

You, Mr. Grattan, cannot be ignorant that this is the true relative ſtate of parties among us. It is morally impoſſible that you ſhould not know it. Yet you act, as it were, in the darkneſs of ignorance.

To cultivate as a leader and a principal, that party which is incapable of taking the lead, and muſt of courſe be always ſubordinate, is, in the preſent claſh of intereſts, a miſerable policy—a dangerous, a fatal miſtake. And yet it is this part which, with much ſententious declamation and ſpeciouſneſs of words, you hold out to the world as your own! Every impartial mind will blame it. But ſhould it be found, that while in words you adhere to this part, you are prepared on the firſt reverſe to abandon it, will not that blame be changed to execration? If ſuch is not your deſign, will you tell us why otherwiſe you lecture us as you do in your laſt publication on the policy, the propriety, the duty of meaſuring the ſtrength of our connexion with Great-Britain by the ſole tenure of her preſent pre-occupancy? As long as things continue in their preſent ſtate, your poſition is choſen, and it is a very tame one: it would not, indeed, be ſafe to attempt aſſuming a bolder. But ſhould rebellion by any chance get the upper hand among us, from that moment your plan is changed: from that moment, to

perſevere

perſevere in loyalty "to a remote court," as you are pleaſed to ſay, would be to incur the guilt of "ſad apoſtacy." The fortunes of the American loyaliſts, and of the landed proprietors of France, became a leſſon to you from that moment "to ſtand by your country in all ſituations; "and that in ſuch a conteſt the firſt poſt of ſafety "is to ſtand by the country, and the ſecond poſt "of ſafety is to ſtand by the country, and the "third poſt of ſafety is to ſtand by the coun-"try."

Have a care, Mr. Grattan, leſt wild ambition and diſappointed vanity lead you a dance of which you are little aware, and which, in your cooler moments, you would ſhudder but to think of. I know, and the well-affected part of your country knows, that you cannot with ſucceſs to the plots of our domeſtic traitors. You have a ſtake in the country; and to ſpeak plainly, the perverſe bias of your politics inclines us to truſt to it, rather than to your moderation, as a pledge for your behaviour. Your political conſequence, ſo far as depends on yourſelf, you have deſtroyed; but you ſtill have an intereſt in the country—of which, if fame and your late conſtituents ſpeak truly, you are prudently careful. It is impoſſible that, with your eyes open, you ſhould give it up to deſtruction. But have a care! Thoſe paſſions which have hurried you to political extinction may ſweep you on to that far more dreadful precipice, from whoſe verge there may be no retreat. There was a time, and that not many years ſince, when

when your declared doctrine was—to ſtand or fall with the Siſter-iſland. Have the goodneſs to compare that declaration with your preſent ſentiments, and tremble at your danger!

THUS much for the domeſtic preparations for a revolution and ſeparation of the countries. I proceed to examine whether you have not been at the ſame trouble to weaken the national exertions abroad, which it has coſt you in ſapping the foundations of legiſlative authority at home.

IN your late publication you hint to us your reaſon why at one period you approved the war, and at another oppoſed it. You there tell us you think it improper to "perſiſt" in a war againſt opinions—eſpecially when thoſe opinions, as you ſay, have abroad the recommendation of conqueſt, and at home that of martyrdom. This principle is ſomewhat plauſible; its ſoundneſs I am not at preſent concerned with. Had you acted upon it, however, you might have had fair ground for your defence. But you did not act upon it. You did not, in any one inſtance, refer to it as your guide. Every particular of your conduct ſhews that you never dreamed of bodying it forth as a ground of action, till you found it expedient to ſhape your apology.

THE beginning of 1793, when the war commenced, was a dreary ſeaſon: the political horizon were that gloomy threatening aſpect, which foreboded the blackeſt and fierceſt tempeſt.—

Thanks to the prudent liberality and manly firmneſs of the adminiſtration, theſe prognoſtics were averted. The great Catholic body was gratified: the ſeditious Catholic leaders were ſilenced. The inſolence of half-cloaked rebellion, which bearded the government, was puniſhed; and an intended appeal to arms among the low retainers of faction was quaſhed, with ſhame and ridicule to its promoters.

The gentlemen of Oppoſition, and you along with them, take credit to themſelves for their moderation at this criſis. Your moderation! What then? You deſerve praiſe, and panegyric, and incenſe, for not ruſhing to claim the foremoſt honours of rebellion! You have ſtakes in the country, and you prized them above theſe precarious honours. You were not, it ſeems, totally blinded by the luſt of popularity, the luſt of place, the luſt of power. You choſe to abide by the certainty of preſent enjoyments, with whatever injuſtice to your merits, and however balked in your purſuits. And for having made this choice, you take pride in the purity of your motives, and the diſintereſtedneſs of your loyalty.

Well, even ſuppoſing merit in the choice, ſtill I deny you the full meaſure of that merit. That choice you did make—but you made it with ſo wretched a grace, that it ſat extremely ill on you. In the main, however, you adhered to it; and why? Becauſe it was politic to take chance with THE PARTY in England, and to follow the equally

prudent

prudent, but far more manly decifion of the Duke of Portland and his friends. A ſingle fact will confirm this ſtatement. When firſt that nobleman and his connexions explained themſelves on the new and alarming changes of affairs, preciſely then was a ſimilar diſcloſure made here on your part. It was made with the warmth which marks a newly adopted ſyſtem; but that warmth regularly ſubſided and roſe with the views of your party, their diſappointments, and their expectations.

In conſequence of the part you had agreed to take, you declared at the outſet, that the preſent was a war in which our enemy was the aggreſſor; that they had declared hoſtilities againſt the Sovereign of theſe kingdoms, on whoſe virtues and claims to our loyalty, hereditary and perſonal, it pleaſed you on that occaſion to paſs many encumiums; and that of courſe we were bound to reſiſt the attack, as an outrage on our form of government, our national independence, and ourſelves.

This is all perfectly intelligible. The only misfortune is that you had here fairly committed yourſelf; for your language is ſo unambiguous, that it is not in the nature of things to miſunderſtand it. How, then, was this language followed up? You well knew that the popular outcry was ſtrong againſt the party you had eſpouſed. Did you not, by eſpouſing that party in ſuch circumſtances, owe ſomething to the cauſe and to

 yourſelf?

yourself? And how did you acquit yourself?—Truly, by ſaying not one ſyllable on the matter. From that day forward you abandoned your cruſade againſt the French revolutioniſts, and your approbation of the war which, according to you, they had provoked, to whoever would take them up. You embarraſſed yourſelf no more with the buſineſs till the beginning of the following ſeſſion, when you told us (you could not now help it) that we muſt ſupport the war. But by this time your zeal is evidently cooled: you inform us, that you never gave an opinion on the grounds of the war, and beg leave to decline doing ſo now.

The next year the ſcene is once more ſhifted: you expatiate on the arduous conteſt in which we are engaged againſt the enemies of "man and the Godhead;" and from our very diſaſters you take occaſion to urge us to a magnanimous perſeverance. Why all this? Becauſe in this ſeſſion forſooth, you are miniſter.

The year following the ſcene again changes; and on the ſubject of the war, unchanged the merits of the queſtion, the aſpect of things as it happened changed conſiderably for the better, you pronounce a philippic, every period of which begins on one point, diſcord and diſheartening diſcontent—the crimes of miniſters in commencing the war, and of your former co-adjutors, in ſupporting it. Why, let us aſk again, this freſh and ſudden alienation? Alas! you were now no longer miniſter!

In

If facts have a meaning, what is to be deduced from this plain ſtatement? Where is the clue to all this inconſiſtency? What is it that thus "makes all doctrines plain and clear?" What is it that makes a war, proclaimed againſt your king and country, as you ſay one day, a war on whole grounds you decline to expreſs an opinion on the next? What makes that fraternized nation "enemies of the creature and the Creator, man and the Godhead," at this moment, be proclaimed in the next, ſtrugglers in the cauſe of a common liberty with our perſecuted Northerns, who become the objects of your fondeſt alliance, and claim the full meaſure of your fondeſt panegyric? Anſwer, Mr. GRATTAN; I muſt be excuſed from attempting it.

WHEN firſt you came forward in ſupport of the war, and in oppoſition to French principles, it might have been ſuppoſed that you would have taken the decided part which ſuch a ſtep warranted. Among good men, much was to have been expected—among the ill-affected, much was to have been feared, from this avowal of your ſentiments. Extenſive and commanding as was at that time your influence among the crowd of politicians, who, though unthinking, are noiſy, and give the tone to the vulgar, both great and ſmall, ſomething more was required from you than alternate fits of warmth and equivocal liking, in a cauſe which, if your feelings were your own, muſt have awakened the feelings of a man. To do juſtice to your feelings, was the ſure and

ſimple

ſimple way to have done juſtice to your cauſe.—But you halted, you heſitated, you wavered; this inſtant you zealouſly approved, and the next juſt as violently condemned. Thus, by trimming and time-ſerving, you loſt the confidence of all parties. Had you adopted a more decided conduct, be it on which ſide it might, what the conſequences would have been to your popularity (in the vulgar ſenſe of the word) I cannot pretend preciſely to ſay: but one thing I know, that though at the worſt you might, ſo far as appearances go, be more avowedly hated (leſs privately diſtruſted and deſpiſed you could not be, even at this moment) you would have been far more the object of real eſteem with that very party whom your forbearance was deſigned to flatter.

To ſpeak the plain truth in few words—thro' the whole of this buſineſs you acted the politician. Your party is by trade politicians. And they temporized and ſhuffled and practiſed the artifices of their trade in a criſis when the ſtability of all the nations of Europe was at ſtake, and when perhaps of none of them all was the ſituation ſo precarious as our own.

On the whole of this very extraordinary detail of facts, what are we to conclude? For a moment we may be diſpoſed to queſtion the evidence of our ſenſes rather than yield to the impreſſions which the recital muſt leave of your character. That character you ſeem not merely to have abandoned to periſh of itſelf: it ſhould

appear

appear as if you had laboured with perverſe induſtry for its deſtruction! All this is the more aſtoniſhing as nobody accuſes you of want of prudence. But the real ſecret of your miſcarriage ſeems to lie in this, that your maxims of prudence were calculated for that narrow ſphere in which they were originally faſhioned. The poſſibility of your preſent ſituation never entered your mind in earlier life; or if it did, it muſt have been as any other highly coloured ſcenery in the varieties of caſtle-building. But you poſſeſſed great talents; circumſtances called theſe talents into the public ſervice; and a moment of characteriſtic national enthuſiaſm did the reſt. The change that followed was too ſudden to admit a natural expanſion to feelings and habits formed in the ſeclusion of ſtudious life, and familiarized into ſecond nature. The public voice had called you to a high and profeſſional, and permanent ſituation; but it could not impart to you that diſcretion in the uſe of power which is the effect of familiarity with high ſituation, and the beſt guarantee againſt its abuſes. Your new rank deprived you of the power of ſelf-regulation; it diſturbed your purpoſes; it diſcloſed your incapacities; it unveiled your moral nakedneſs. Your accuſtomed principles of action would no longer apply, and you had not formed any new ones to replace them with; you were forced from the foundations of your conſiſtency; your will became the ſport of every guſt of paſſion and unchecked deſire; and in the end you have made complete ſhipwreck of your character.

Turn

Turn which way you will, your conduct presents us with instances of passion pushed to the bounds of folly, and of a headlong violence of assertion which outrages the first principles of common sense. Recollect as a single instance of this, where instances are so many, your assertion in the course of the last session, that the minister of England abandoned this country to invasion—BECAUSE it was his wish to treat her infolently and contumeliously. This was your language; this the exact tenor and spirit of your assertion. Was this assertion made with a conviction that it was true, or was it not? Either side of the dilemma is dreadfully against you. For what must we think of a woman's avidity of revengeful gratification, and a woman's or a child's contempt of its consequences being thus powerful to absorb in you all manly feeling, and to suspend or extinguish all the pride and power of intellect? Or what must we think of the same passion less impetuously but more systematically indulged leading you to a step which, the time and circumstances connected with the causes to which that step must be traced, all considered, exhibits a flagrancy of delinquency, in the hour of enthusiasm, of which for the honor of Irishmen, and for the sake of human nature, it were well for all parties that the memory were done away.

One instance more of your wild inconsistency of purpose, and I have done. It was after you had forfeited the confidence of your former friends, and been disgraced with disgrace from your short-lived authority, that you began to think

think of Mr. Fox as a useful man for retrieving your affairs,—Mr. Fox whom you had neglected, from whom you had estranged yourself, whom you had contrived to banish as well from your memory as from your connexion. It had been for a while convenient to do so: but times were changed. It was therefore that on a sudden you began to preach up to us that gentleman, his gigantic talents, and the super human measure of his foresight. It was now too that abasing yourself at his feet you made an abject surrender to him of your opinions and yourself. There was no other set of politicians at the time that would do your business; none that would allow you to dispose yourself at the tail-end of their party. To Mr. Fox of course you made an unconditional transfer of your allegiance; you gave all your former heresies, public and personal, to the winds; and you yielded up to excommunication or whatever greater shame or punishment could be devised, all your former accomplices in transgression.

It was then that we heard you with pious zeal denounce that band of traitors to public and to private duty, "guilty of the grossest treachery to their dearest friend." This was literally your expression—on the first day of the session of 1796. That band of conspirators was the Portland party; that friend was Mr. Fox. Of public treachery I know none: at least if any there was, you had your full share in it. But of private treason, if

former history of the Session were enquired into, *you must stand equally guilty with yourself.*

"The grossest treachery to the dearest friend!" Mr. Grattan—recollect yourself. Who are the traitors whom your virtuous indignation would hold up to infamy? The very men whom you courted and hung on, and parleyed with, and stuck to with many a longing, fearful, persevering hope through all the difficulties and perplexing mazes of a negotiation, the issue of which proved that they originated in your own unwarranted pretensions. Who are the traitors whom you before cultivated with time-serving adulation, and whom you now spurn with holy abhorrence? Foremost among them is Earl Fitzwilliam! But no wonder, sir, that you should make no ceremony with his Lordship, when you are in such a hurry to stigmatize yourself.

But, Sir, the worst after all is, that Mr. Fox, as it turns up, can be of no service to you. Mr. Fox has no chance of serving himself. From all your schemes you have reaped only disappointment.

Sick of the scene, you now retire from politics altogether—taking care, however, to make a virtue of necessity, and to claim merit from your secession. You do not retire, indeed, till you have been left alone on the stage, a solitary actor, a discarded favourite. You do not retire till you

and

have opened heaven and earth for a reſpite. You look to this quarter for protection; you point out grievances exiſting in another; you proteſt againſt this and that dereliction of principle; you put your friends in mind of your claims of gratitude and their debts of honour; then you aſſume merit on the ſcore of ſhifting ſides, and on the credit of antiquated attachment. All will not do. It only remains for you to go into baniſhment; and the ſingle alleviation which you can promiſe yourſelf in your affliction is the chaſte ſympathy of Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Hoare, and Mr. Curran.

"Pressed by hunger"—the craving hunger of vanity—"and requeſt of friends," you may one day break through the barrier which ſeparates you from public life. To you excuſes will not be wanting, ſo long as you poſſeſs words: to you it will at any time be an eaſy matter to dreſs the emptieſt nothings in robes of moſt impoſing ſemblance. Or failing this, it may ſuffice you juſt to expreſs—"I once retired: it is now my pleaſure to return." Yet will we cheriſh the hope, that in this ſolitary inſtance you may ſhew yourſelf capable of conſiſtency. We will recollect your farewell ſpeech in parliament, in which you told us, that "the King muſt" firſt "identify with his People,"—privilege become the bulwark of prerogative, ſtrength the protection of weakneſs; that "as the People have given to the King "the powers of government, ſo muſt reſtore to

"them"